

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mr. OWENS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. OWENS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

REPUBLICANS PROVIDE SECURITY TO AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to be here tonight and to share this time with my colleagues, several of whom I believe will be joining me. We are going to be talking tonight about national security.

I want to start the evening with a very simple comment about a very simple item. I am wearing on my arm, or I have just taken off, a bracelet. These are very common these days to commemorate different things. It says AMAR. It represents AMAR Manufacturing Corporation.

Today, in my home district in Davie County, we had a celebration about a new manufacturing plant that is going to open up. And it occurred to me as we were doing that today, and as I looked at this, that the people of America are going on about their business on a day-to-day basis, oblivious of the fact that there are many things going on in our country and outside our country to help us be secure.

The American people are in many ways the most secure people in the world. We are used to going on about our business, having announcements of new businesses and just dealing on a day-to-day basis with taking our children to school, taking them to football practice, to baseball practice, doing all of those things that we are used to doing because we live in a very secure Nation.

It is the role of the Federal Government to keep our Nation secure. The number one responsibility of the Federal Government is the defense of this Nation, and a large part of the defense of this Nation again is tied up in the word security.

So we want to talk tonight a little bit about what has happened to threaten that security in the last 30 years or so and what we have done as a Republican Congress in order to bring back a sense of security to our Nation.

We will talk about horrific events that have happened in the past but also talk about the many achievements that have occurred especially in the last 5 years in terms of our bringing back a sense of security and our making sure that in the future the things that we are doing now can be built upon and can allow the people of this country to go about their daily routines and feel secure and not feel threatened in the things that they want to do.

The United States of America has never been an aggressor nation. We have always focused again on providing for the freedom that we have in this country and making sure that what the average American takes for granted every day will be there for him or her.

I want to recognize now my wonderful colleague, the gentlewoman from Tennessee, Congresswoman BLACKBURN, who is such an articulate spokesperson for so many of the issues that we discuss on the floor of the House. She is going to help talk about the issue of national security.

I think she is going to give a little perspective on where we have come from and where we are now in terms of dealing with this issue.

I would like to recognize again my colleague, the gentlewoman from Tennessee, Congresswoman BLACKBURN.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from North Carolina. I thank her for her commitment to keeping our Nation safe. As an educator and having spent many years in schools teaching, leading, directing those activities, she knows that it is an imperative that, in order for children to learn, they have to feel secure in their environment.

In order for parents to participate, they have to have that sense of certainty that there is control and security. And this is something that, yes, in our free Nation we are so blessed and so grateful to be able to just expect that.

When we get up in the morning, we expect that we are going to be able to put the children on the school bus, that we are going to be able to go to work, go to the grocery store and participate in those activities with a little bit of control over what happens in those environments and with some predictability and certainty as to what the expectations are going to be.

So indeed we are very blessed in that regard. It is an incredible gift that having a strong national defense, how wonderful it is, what a gift that that has allowed us as a people to enjoy.

As the gentlewoman said, sometimes in order to look forward and to assess, what we have to do is be certain that we have perspective, that we look at where we have been, where we have come from and where we are heading.

In a Nation where we have defense as one of our top priorities and where it is one of the top priorities of this Government, sometimes it is important to cast that perspective and to say this is why we have to say, back to basics, shift our focus, and begin to look at terrorist attacks not as civil disobedience but to view them as what they are, acts of war, and to respond to them as what they are, acts of war.

And as the gentlewoman mentioned, this is a problem that has been brewing and that we have had to deal with for decades. Terrorism and terrorists have been attacking our Nation not for a few months, and it did not start on September 11. It has been going on for decades.

I think that many of us remember November of 1979 when the Iranian radicals took control of the embassy in Tehran. That was a siege that lasted for 444 days, where they had the embassy and 53 hostages. We all remember how the end of that attack came about.

In 1983, we had 63 people that were killed in an embassy bombing in Lebanon. 1983, also, there was a suicide bomb attack on the U.S. compound in Lebanon, where 242 Americans were attacked and killed. All the while, attacks that were taking place on U.S. interests but not on U.S. soil.

In 1986, a Berlin discotheque was bombed, and we also had 79 servicemen that were bombed, injured in a bombing attack in West Germany.

In 1988, we remember December of 1988, Pan Am flight 103 that was blown up by the Libyan terrorists.

And then in February of 1993 the first World Trade Center bombing killed 6 people, injured over 1,000 people. That was February of 1993.

Going through the following years and leading up to September 11, 2001. In 1995, we had a military complex in Saudi Arabia that was bombed. The Khobar Towers in 1996. The attack in our embassies in 1998. The Cole bombing by al Qaeda in 2000; and then, of course, the al Qaeda-led plot that was enacted on September 11, 2001.

Now, Mr. Speaker, what we see from this is the pattern of terrorist activity for two full decades. What we also have seen since September 11 is that no longer do we respond to terrorist attacks as civil disobedience; we respond to it as an act of war, as what it is.

One of the things that we have to keep focused on right now, every single day, is that this war on terror is just that, it is a war. Yes, we have the battle in Afghanistan. Yes, the battle in Iraq. And, yes, there are terrorist cells that are scattered around the globe. But we started sending a different message on September 11. And we are very grateful for the work that the intelligence community, that our homeland security organizations, that our American military has done, that the coalition partners have done in working together to fight terrorism, to fight the spread of terrorism.

And the reason we do it, Mr. Speaker, the reason the leadership in this House remains so solidly focused on terrorism is exactly what my colleague was speaking of when she opened her remarks. The reason is so that the American people can go about their daily lives exercising the control, exercising the freedom, being certain that those children are going to school in safe and free environments, being certain that they are going into the workplace with safe and free environments.

That is the reason that the focus has shifted. That is the reason that it remains the top priority of the leadership of this House.

I also want to thank the leadership for the work that they have done on this issue and our colleagues who are